

**MINUTES  
DANIA BEACH CITY COMMISSION  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
NOVEMBER 18, 2003**

1. Call to order

Mayor Anton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present:

Mayor:	Bob Anton
Vice-Mayor:	C.K. McElyea
Commissioners:	Robert Chunn
	Pat Flury
	Bob Mikes
City Attorney:	Tom Ansbro
City Manager:	Ivan Pato
Acting City Clerk	Miriam Nasser

3. Consideration of street closure impact on development and public safety in the southwest section of the City. (City Manager)

City Manager Pato read the six steps contained in the Procedures for Street Closure. He advised the Commission that they could make any changes to the street closure procedures if they so desired. City Manager Pato asked Chief Cowart to provide an overview of the Dania Heights area street closures that were already in progress.

Chief Bryan Cowart, BSO District 2, stated that the Dania Heights street closure project was already in progress when he arrived at the City of Dania Beach. He explained that six months prior to the street closures being enacted, crime and traffic statistics were analyzed and temporary barricades were set up at key intersections throughout the area, with boundaries from Sheridan Street to West Dixie Highway and SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the FEC. Chief Cowart reported that a 60 percent crime reduction was recorded when the before and after statistics were compared and cost per service was reduced 21 percent. He further explained that Calvin Giordano, an engineering firm, conducted a traffic volume study on several area streets, including SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and reported that before the closure there were 2291 vehicles compared to 3385 after the closure. Chief Cowart stated that the speed increases were inconsequential – less than one mile per hour. He stated that after one year the crime and cost per service statistic had remained lower than before the street closures and currently the average traffic volume on SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue had decreased to 3166 vehicles. He confirmed that the study was also conducted on SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and although the initial results indicated a traffic volume reduction, the traffic flow average had increased to the original volume. Chief Cowart reported that a study had also been conducted on SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, North of Dixie Highway and the average traffic volume around Olsen Middle School was approximately 4200 vehicles.

City Manager Pato asked Fire Marshal Tarmey to give a report on his research.

Ed Tarmey, Dania Beach Fire Marshal, showed a map of the service area and stated that SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue was the main thoroughfare for fire/rescue access. Fire Marshal Tarmey pointed out the major structure fires that had occurred over the past five years. He noted that many had occurred to the west of SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and although speed humps and closures reduced crime, they had not reduced the number of heart attacks, structure fires, or injuries. He stated that speed humps had a negative affect not only on the Fire Department response times, but also the transportation of patients with injuries. He explained that documentation confirmed that taking patients with broken bones or other traumatic injuries over speed humps caused excessive, unnecessary pain. He also showed statistically how speed humps caused delay in emergency response. Fire Marshal Tarmey explained the increased front end & alignment damage and costs that fire vehicles sustained because of speed humps. He also explained how road closures negatively affected the fire service, particularly in not providing proper turning areas at the base of dead ends. He reported that road closures did not meet the minimum requirements of the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Engineers and stressed that according to the National Transportation Association roads exceeding 150 feet were required to have a turning area of a type and size approved by the fire chief, which would not be less than a 60 foot diameter, and dead end roads exceeding 300 feet required a turn-around of 100 feet. He read a quote concerning possible litigation risks associated by traffic calming programs relying on neighborhood petitions, financial antes, and casual observations of traffic conditions. Fire Marshall Tarmey concluded by urging the City Commission to follow the policies and procedures that were in place to ensure that public fire safety aspects of road closures and speed humps were followed so the Fire Department could maintain a good community service.

City Manager Pato made a recommendation that should the Commission be uncomfortable with the current road closure and speed bump procedures, that they revisited the procedure and implement additional requirements. He suggested beginning the following three-phase plan of action: 1) neighborhood petition and community education process; 2) temporary traffic calming installation, comparisons, and evaluations for a six month period; and 3) public meeting and discussion. City Manager Pato showed examples and costs of devices and practices other municipalities were using to handle the Fire Department emergency response problems. City Manager Pato addressed specific issues and costs associated with SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and stated that a traffic area study of SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue would cost approximately \$9100 and a study of the entire area including signage, lighting, and community meetings would cost approximately \$21,500 for a one-half mile radius.

City Manager Pato stated that the money had already been budgeted to address this study as mentioned in the Urban Infill Study. He recommended that the Commission identified specific areas within the City that needed to be addressed as well as the cost of the studies involved. City Manager Pato stated that he personally was a proponent of closing SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from the very beginning even though he was aware of the Fire Department's objections. He acknowledged that there were liability issues to be addressed.

Mayor Anton recounted how the project originated several years ago with a meeting with the Dania Heights group and the plan was to gradually close the entire southwest area from Stirling Road to Sheridan Street. He explained that because of public safety issues, SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue could not be immediately blocked and acknowledged that the number of cars going through that area should be reduced. He felt that the majority of traffic on the street was during school hours

and rush hour, as people were trying to escape the heavy traffic on Dixie Highway. Mayor Anton stated that he had met with City Manager Pato, Community Development Director Laurence Leeds, Public Services Director Mike Sheridan, and a representative from the Fire Department and determined a plan to try to limit the traffic on SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue by narrowing the roadway at Sheridan Street designated for emergency vehicles only. Mayor Anton was concerned about where the dispersed SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue traffic would go and was interested in having a survey conducted by engineers. He felt the current procedures for road closures and speed humps should be followed.

Commissioner Chunn agreed with Mayor Anton especially in regards to having the study performed and stated he was concerned about Fire Department access. He supported following the process to determine what would affect the City and its residents. He stated that he would not support anything that would not protect the City and its citizens.

Commissioner Mikes stated that he did not like to have to close streets, but felt that it had been necessary because of the crime situation in that area. He stressed the necessity of having a qualified engineer approval whenever traffic devices were installed. Commissioner Mikes agreed that a process needed to be followed in these situations which included making studies and felt that other alternatives should be explored, such as the rotaries he had seen in Pompano Beach. He felt that if an ordinance was changed, it should be based on criteria already in place by other municipalities. He sympathized with the residents that had experienced increased traffic, but felt that the crime reduction goal had been reached by closing the street.

Commissioner Chunn noted that although the street closures might have assisted in Crime reduction, BSO should be credited for their work.

Commissioner Flury reiterated the fact that there was excessive traffic on SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and did not like the idea of street closure. She felt other possibilities, such as rotaries, should be explored. She wanted to see statistics presented in a year-by-year format as opposed to being lumped together in three-year increments. She stressed the need to have a comprehensive view of the area and was concerned that the process concerning street closures and speed humps would not work in this case because there were too many rentals in the area to get the petition required to begin the process.

Commissioner Chunn reminded the Commission that the process included the proper studies.

Commissioner Flury stated that she was not necessarily speaking about street closures because she was not confident it would be the solution to the problem and there were other traffic calming devices such as rotaries, speed humps, or speed bumps that could be utilized.

City Manager Pato clarified that there were two issues being confused. He stated that in order to address street closures or speed humps there was a specific process to be followed that did begin with a petition. He further stated that the Commission could have a comprehensive study done for a specific area, as Commissioner Flury suggested, but it was a separate issue and had to be discussed at a different time because this workshop was specifically about street closures.

Commissioner Mikes felt the purpose of the petition to begin the street closure process was to ensure a consensus from the community that this was what they wanted. He agreed with Commissioner Flury that there were other alternatives besides street closure. He wanted to

follow the street closure process in order to assure the residents that the Commission was going to do something with the streets in question.

City Manager Pato advised that a couple of traffic engineers were in attendance to answer questions.

Leo Williams, Public Services Superintendent stated that the comprehensive study would be a four to six month process and personally recommended it.

Vice-Mayor McElyea stated that he had always been against street closures, but felt since the comprehensive study was in the budget that it should be conducted.

In response to Commissioner Flury's question, Leo Williams confirmed that traffic circles were effective for reducing the sight line, but warned that the fire department should be consulted as the larger vehicles might have difficulty maneuvering around them.

In response to Mayor Anton's question, Engineer Williams stated that traffic circles were effective in speeding and cut-through situations as well as neighborhood enhancements.

Chief Kenneth Land, Dania Beach Fire Department, commented that the Fire Department only opposed street closures because of public safety. He was not opposed to working with traffic engineers to get the fire trucks through.

Mayor Anton stated that as far as SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue was concerned, whether a decision was made either to put in a turn around or narrow the roadway, an opportunity would be available to eliminate the speed humps. He agreed with the Fire Department that an access problem existed, but it was not exclusive to the City of Dania Beach.

Commissioner Mikes stated that he had been involved when the four-way stops were placed on SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and it had created a conflict with the County. He felt there were always risks when installing speed bumps and would not be surprised if speed bumps' sizes and distances between them became regulated.

Mayor Anton recommended that Chief Cowart looked at SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and attempt to determine how much of the high volume traffic was associated with Olsen Middle School and how much could be attributed to cut-through.

Commissioner Mikes felt that the close proximity of I-95 to US 1 created some of the traffic volume issues and that Dania Beach citizens did not create the problems.

Mayor Anton asked City Clerk Johnson to place a discussion item of the Comprehensive Traffic Study in Dania Heights on a future Commission Meeting agenda.

Mayor Anton reminded the public of the December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Airport Expansion meetings and recommended that all residents send e-mails and urge the County Commission that they hold these meetings in the evening in a larger forum. He recommended to citizens who were not close to the airport to get involved and hold Broward County Commission accountable for what they did.

Commissioner Mikes commented that the airport pollution affected all residents.

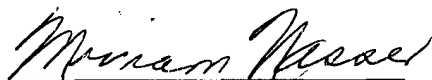
Mayor Anton advised that the Triangle Village Bed & Breakfast issue would not be addressed in this meeting since it was not on the agenda and he felt more research on the topic was necessary.

4. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

  
BOB ANTON  
MAYOR-COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

  
MIRIAM NASSER  
ACTING CITY CLERK

Respectfully submitted by Jill Fiorentino

APPROVED: February 10, 2004